

with a glance back to assure himself of the distance away of Willard. "will you kindly walk on with me? I have something of great importance to say to you."

"I—I—yes, certainly," she stammered, but her gait was reluctant as she kept pace with him.

She had always considered Evans far above her humble family in the way of wealth and social position. As a friendly neighbor, as a hopeless invalid, as she had heard, she could not very well decline his suggestion, although her mind was entirely with the man who must soon overtake them.

"You must trust and believe me," went on Evans, gravely and insistently. "By chance, but beyond a doubt, I have learned that the person for whom you are about to abandon home and friends is a scoundrel."

She came to a dead standstill, her face white, resentful and unbelieving.

"There is no time to discuss this," proceeded Evans rapidly. "You have been grossly deceived, as I can prove to you. You must not meet this man. Go home and I will later convince you of the truth of what I say."

His earnestness held her, his superior will power drove back perversity. She swayed as if about to faint.

"He is a bigamist," added Evans. "Trust me, I am acting in the matter wholly for your own good, to avoid the misery and heartbreak of those at home who love you. Hasten, I beg of you."

"Lillas!" called the voice of Willard, for he had nearly reached them now. The girl uttered a muffled-sob and hurried away. Evans put up his hand and halted the scoundrel as he approached.

"You are unmasked and your intended victim knows of your true character and designs," spoke Evans, and his calm dignity abashed the wretch. "If you take one step after that young lady I will have you under lock and key within five minutes."

Go your way. Your evil schemes are baffled."

The man slunk away like a beaten cur. Once again Evans saw Lillas Deane. It was in the little park near her home. They sat on a bench engaged in conversation for over an hour. Evans disclosed all that he had learned of Willard, and Lillas was shocked, appalled, and then the tears of gratitude came into her eyes as she realized what this disinterested friend had saved her from.

"Oh, never, never will I forget your kind care for me!" she sobbed. "Wherever you are I shall think of you and pray that the greatest good may come to you," and she bent and kissed his hand and watched him go away, and took up the old home duties, shuddering whenever she recounted how narrowly she had escaped the wiles of the heartless adventurer.

It was a year later when the news came to Rockton of the death of Ward Evans. He was one of over 50 overtaken in a volcanic island of the Pacific by an eruption. What had been recovered of his remains had been sent to his former home. A simple headstone in the village cemetery told of his cruel fate.

And never Lillas forget him! That last interview with him had left with her an impression of almost adoration for the noble spirit, that, amid personal suffering, had paused to do her a vast service.

His memory became to her an ideal. To her, though dead, he was more than any other man living. Every week she would visit the little cemetery, and, seated on a grass plot near the lowly grave, would weave a wreath of the choicest wild flowers and place them upon the little mound.

"He was all that is noble and good," she murmured one day, as she kissed the simple wreath she had made and set it in place. "He has made my life sweet with its impulses of duty, and I love him, I love him."